AmeriCorps*State
Program Design and Handbook

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Program Year

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Funding Announcement and Service Area Introduction

Detail the amount received in the grant, the amount of match that is pledged and from where, and the areas that will be served by the activities of the members (specific sites and service areas).

Organizational Authorization

Include the information from your signed and notarized Certification of Authorization to the Office on Volunteerism and Community Service. Identify your legal name and address, and the individuals that will have authority to sign contracts and requests for reimbursement.

Organizational History, and Program Purpose and Objective

Describe your organization's mission and activities. Detail the purpose of the AmeriCorps program, including why you have sought out and are utilizing AmeriCorps Members to accomplish these activities, and what your immediate and long-term objectives are for your AmeriCorps program. Include the measurable outcomes to be achieved, and how achieving the outcomes will impact the community as a whole.

Program Staff

List all staff/site supervisors that have a role in the program. Detail all aspects of their involvement, particularly their roles and responsibilities, including the members that will report to them (position type/description).

Describe the training that will be offered to staff, including trainings offered by the grantee and trainings from OVCS that will be attended by staff. Describe how the training will be structured (what, when, who, and how?). Describe any steps you will need to take to make these trainings happen, and when these steps will be completed. If staff is geographically dispersed, describe how they will form a team. Detail how program staff will receive AmeriCorps-specific training, including training on prohibited activities, grievance procedures, program policies, timekeeping and approval, reporting, social media protocol, and more. Include a training calendar for staff as an appendix to this document.

Describe the requirements for each staff person, including documentation of time for match purposes, and the criminal history requirements to be documented for each.

Member Recruitment

Detail the processes and methods that will be used in the recruitment of members. Include any information that will be supplied to potential members for use in making the decision to serve. Describe how members will be included from the local communities to be served by your program and how they will be recruited from traditionally underrepresented populations.

Describe your disability self-assessment and how it will be used in the recruitment of members. Include your disability self-assessment as an appendix to this document.

Describe all member slots/types, and all benefits that will be available to members. You may include a list of member benefits as an appendix to this document.

**You must include a list of all member slot/types in your Program Design, and expected dates of enrollment in your Management Plan (appendix A).

Member Training

Give <u>specific </u>information on ALL training that is planned for members. Identify the type of training that will be provided and curricula that will be used, who will provide the training, cost involved, and where the training will occur. Discuss how you will reach the goal of 20% of overall total of members' time being spent on training and development. This should include the orientation, trainings specific to the mission of your organization, member and professional development, online trainings, regularly scheduled meetings, and any other items that you intend to report as training. Include ANY items that will be listed by members on timesheets with as much detail as possible. Include a detailed training calendar as an appendix to this document. If you will have members at geographically-dispersed sites, be sure to describe all activities that will be used to allow these members to coalesce as one AmeriCorps team.

Emergency Preparedness Plan

Description of how the organization will train members on Emergency Preparedness, including possible disaster training as part of a regional launch. Possible issues to address include:
1. What emergencies or disasters are most likely to occur in their community.
2. How to develop a family disaster plan and commit to practicing it.
3. How to develop an emergency preparedness kit.
4. Have knowledge of additional training resources so they can become involved in helping their community prepare for an emergency.

Program Documentation

Include as appendices to this document any Position Descriptions to be used and templates of Member Contracts for each Position Description (**Appendix D, Position Descriptions; Appendix E, Contracts**).

Describe how all files will be developed and maintained. For example, if a member file that follows the OVCS checklist will be kept, describe the person responsible for each of the required documents in those files and where they will be available for review. This must include the methods that will be used to document age and citizenship/residency.

Detail the process for completing Criminal Background Checks. If any part of the process will result in documentation that will be kept at a site other than the one identified for member files,

describe the process that will be used for ensuring that those files are available for review by OVCS for monitoring. Describe how your program meets the requirements outlined in the OVCS four-part background check process. (*If the four-part background check process and all requirements outlined within cannot be met, an Alternative Search Protocol must be requested by July 1, 2014, and steps to do so must be included in the Program Management Plan.*)

Describe the files that will be kept for staff persons, including criminal background checks, timesheets, and any other necessary program documents.

Program Management

Describe the process for receiving, reviewing, and approving timesheets. Detail the actions that will be taken for any timesheets that aren't promptly submitted OR approved by site supervisors.

Describe the methods and frequency of communication between Program Director, Site Supervisors and Members. Give dates for when member evaluations will occur and who will conduct them.

Describe your organization's plan for maximizing the use of OnCorps for reporting. Include information that will be emphasized in Monthly Reports, and how members will be encouraged and tracked regarding Great Stories, Member Reports, Volunteer Mobilization, and Civic/Direct Service/Capacity Building Activities.

Develop and maintain a management plan, detailing all activities to be completed during the course of the grant, with a responsibility chart and completion date for each activity. A sample is available, and this document will become Appendix A to this document. After execution of this Program Design, the management plan may be revised only with input and approval from your Program Officer.

List all sites and/or partners, and the methods by which communication will be handled with each. **Include in Appendix B the copies of any partnership agreements.**

Describe your Member Retention Plan (proper resources, coaching/feedback, clear goals, recognition, opportunities for development). *This could be included as an Appendix if thoroughly developed.*

Fiscal Management and Documentation

Describe the process for keeping the Fiscal Director informed of Program Activities. Describe the process and individuals involved in preparing, approving, submitting for approval, and submitting for payment all reimbursements.

Describe how all match will be documented.

Describe the process for approving and executing payment of living allowance to members. Describe any policies regarding members that are delinquent in paperwork or severely behind in completion of hours towards their term of service.

Utilizing Media

Describe the forms of social media that your program will utilize, and how that use will highlight your AmeriCorps program.

List at least 2 newspapers in your area (including free newspapers), at least 2 radio stations, and at any TV stations (including Public Access), and describe how you will utilize these media to publicize your program. Include how and when you will utilize papers, radio, and TV.

Describe how AmeriCorps will be displayed/discussed on your website, and any outside resources you will utilize to accomplish this.

Include all other activities you will utilize to publicize the AmeriCorps program, including the use of information in your e-mail signature, any logos and branding that will be placed at your office and at sites, etc.

Include information on the dates for completion of these activities in your management plan (appendix A).

Service Days

List the activities that members will coordinate or participate in on required service days. For Martin Luther King, Jr. day, list at least three activities that your program may participate in. List other potential service days that have been identified (i.e. 9/11). Describe how service days are to be included in member service contracts. Describe organizations that you will approach as partners in service day projects. If service days will be planned later by members, give specific details of how and when those planning activities will be carried out. *It will be expected that service days become a part of your management plan, and therefore the timeline for making this event a success must be detailed in that plan.*

Program Evaluation

Describe the process that will be used in gathering data for use in a Program Evaluation, including data on civil rights compliance, demographics, and inclusion of individuals with disabilities. Elements of your evaluation that should be detailed include:
- Purpose of evaluation (understanding program operations, providing evidence of causal relationship between program services and outcomes, etc.)
- Questions to be answered by evaluation, or uses of the evaluation (what was accomplished, what aspects were a success/failure, were changes a result of the services in the program, what unexpected changes/results occurred, what decisions can you make

based on the results, is there room for improvement and how would that be accomplished)
- Methods/Designs (interviews, observations, case studies, pre-post tests or surveys, focus groups, data gathering and analysis)
- Approach (who will be involved and what will be the process for meeting the purpose, answering the questions, and employing the methods to complete a useful evaluation)
    - Should include the timeframe for carrying out the elements of the evaluation, including the planning and collection of information as well as the use of information

Grievance Procedures

Detail the process by which all grievances will be handled. OVCS has a model grievance procedure that may be modified for use in this section. Grievance procedures must at a minimum include: alternative dispute resolution; grievance procedure for unresolved complaints; time limitations on filing a grievance; arbitration; and remedies for a grievance filed under a procedure established by a recipient of Corporation assistance.

Required Policies and Procedures

- Prohibited Activities

    - Listing of the prohibited activities from 45 CFR Part 2520.65, and how the Program Director will ensure that members do not engage in them.

- Restrictions on Use of Corporation Assistance
    - List the restrictions found at 45 CFR Part 2540.100 and state your program's understanding and commitment to comply with this statute. These include the restrictions on supplantation, displacement, and duplication.

- Reasonable Accommodation and Accessibility
    - Description of how recipients of services and AmeriCorps members will be assured reasonable accommodation and accessibility (should utilize your disability self-assessment)

- Acquiring a GED
    - How will members be supported in acquiring a GED, if necessary?

- Voting Allowance
    - Policy assuring members that they will be allowed time to vote with no penalty, and encouraging them to do so.

- Jury Duty Leave
    - Policy allowing members to serve on a jury with no penalty.

- Military Duty Leave
  - Policy allowing members to serve in the Armed Forces Reserves with no penalties

- Appropriate Member Supervision
  - Describe in this section how the program will provide members with appropriate supervision that follows CNCS guidelines and policies. See AmeriCorps State and National Provisions, Section IV. D for supervision requirements. Most of these requirements are already discussed in the Program Design, and this section should be used to list requirements and describe how each is discussed in this document.

- Member Performance Reviews
  - Detail when reviews will be done (mid-year, end of year?), who will be doing them, and how members will be able to respond to them.

- Safety Precautions
  - Create a safety policy that includes all aspects of a member's service. There should be emphasis on member safety as a means of avoiding injuries, with reference to the limitations of worker's compensation. Members' injuries are not guaranteed to be covered, and even if they are covered they will not recoup lost wages.

- Reporting Injuries
  - Give your Worker's Compensation policy, including the method/timeframe/responsibilities of a member for providing information as soon as possible. This section could include the information from the OVCS Worker's Compensation guidance document.

- Child Care Coverage
  - Policy for members.

- Family and Medical Leave Coverage
  - Policy for members.

- Notification of Changes to Child and Health Care Providers
  - Procedure for notifying members of any changes to above.

- Release from Term of Service
  - Describe the process for determining whether a release from term of service is for cause, or is for a compelling circumstance. Detail the ramifications of each with regard to education awards, and the process for initiating and documenting a release.

- Compliance with the Drug-Free Workplace Act
  - Policy that documents compliance with the Drug-Free Workplace Act

- Non-discrimination Statement

- Include a policy and plan to meet the 2013 Provisions for State Administrative, Program Development and Training, and Disability Placement Grants, Section E.15 requirements, which includes notification to service recipients, applicants, program staff, and the public, including those with impaired vision or hearing, that it operates its program or its activity subject to the non-discrimination requirements of the applicable statutes. Sample language provided states:
    - *It is against the law for organizations that receive federal financial assistance from the Corporation for National Service to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, sex, age, political affiliation, or, in most programs, religion. It is also unlawful to retaliate against any person who, or organization that, files a complaint about such discrimination.*

- Criminal History Policy
    - Detail the policies and procedures for Members and Staff that are shown through initial investigation to have a criminal history record from the State and/or FBI. The procedure must include the manner in which all criminal history records will be attained. If your program design involves frequent involvement of members that disclose criminal history prior to submission of fingerprints, a procedure for submitting for criminal history record initially may be developed. The policy must include any criminal history findings that will result in the exclusion of a member from service.

Possible or Suggested Policies and Procedures for Inclusion

(These policies and procedures are items that can give members necessary information for their terms, but are not prescribed with any specific requirements by OVCS or CNCS. These may be changed or added at the program's discretion when completing this Program Design, but will become a part of the Final Design document upon execution)

- AmeriCorps Service Classification (by term)

    - Include a general listing of allowable service classifications by term

- Probationary Period?

    - Some programs may choose to institute a probationary period, which would require institution of an advanced evaluation timetable.

- Personnel Records and Administration

- Weather-related Closings

- Holiday/Vacation/Sick/Bereavement Policy

- Absence/Lateness/Attendance/Punctuality

- Hours of Scheduled Service

- Ethical Standards

- Dress Code

- Use of Equipment, Internet, E-mail, etc.

- Meal and Break Periods

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- Company Supplies, Expenses

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- Acceptable Use of IT Systems

Appendices

A. Program Management Plan
B. Partnership Agreements
C. Disability Self-Assessment
D. Position Descriptions
E. Member Contract
F. Training Calendar for Staff
G. Training Calendar for Members
H. Financial Module C
I. Member Benefits List (if not detailed in narrative)
J. Certification of Availability of Match Funds
K. Certification of Approval for use of Federal Funds
L. Certification of Organization Authorization